Gartner Research

Publication Date: 26 August 2009 **ID Number: G00169320**

Focusing Your Business Process Analysis Tool Selection

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Business process improvement (BPI) initiatives range from strategic to tactical, and the people, processes and technologies needed to support this spectrum of possibilities varies greatly. Strategic BPI projects may require the involvement of enterprise and business architectures and analysts using formal, robust methodologies and sophisticated tools. Tactical BPI projects may focus on business users and business process analysts using agile methods and technologies that support the rapid deployment of solutions. In this research, we examine different scenarios for BPI and how they might affect which technologies are most appropriate for use by those conducting business process analysis (BPA).

Key Findings

- Most organizations start out with inexpensive, easy-to-use visual diagramming tools to support BPA, then eventually purchase more-expensive and more-robust enterprise BPA tools.
- Enterprise BPA tools are the key technology in supporting enterprise BPI. They can be used to support enterprise business architects and business process architects and analysts, in collaboration with other types of architects and analysts.
- The models built within enterprise BPA tools can be leveraged by those doing BPI in a business process management suite (BPMS), those doing application package acquisition and implementation, or in conjunction with IT development and data management projects.

Recommendations

- Organizations are advised to use the enterprise BPI reference architecture, which includes BPA tools, for technology architecture planning purposes driven by business architecture plans.
- Ensure that when selecting process modeling tools, the functionality criteria and their weightings match their planned uses. It is not uncommon to have different modeling tools used by enterprise business architects, business process architects and analysts versus by those focused on designing and automating process flows. Organizations may find it beneficial to have more than one type of BPA modeling tool.

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ANALYSIS

When organizations ask Gartner about business process modeling tools, most assume that there is a single market for them. This is not the case. We track these tools in two markets — business process management suites (BPMSs) and enterprise BPA tools. There is third area of buyer focus on low-cost, easy-to-use tools that can span aspects of both markets, but it's not a market itself.

It is not uncommon to have multiple tools to meet the breadth of process modeling needs — for example, having an enterprise BPA tool for sophisticated modelers and another low-cost, easy-to-use BPA tool for use by the masses of other modelers, including business users. Also, within some BPMSs, there can be two different process modeling technologies — one for modeling processes at an abstracted level of detail (BPA) and another at the physical process flow level in the process execution and state management engine portion of the BPMS.

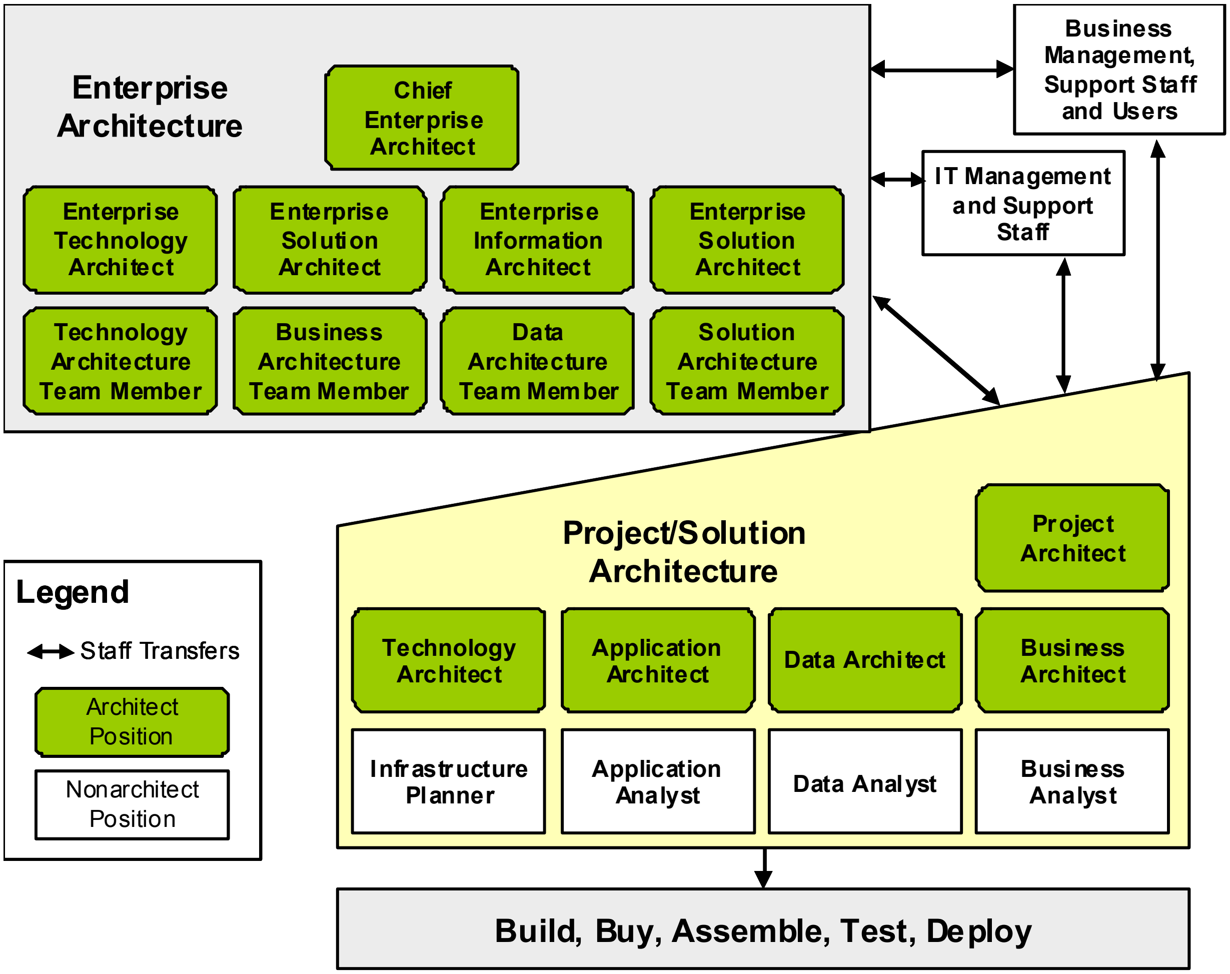
Therefore, choosing the right focus — and the right tool within that focus — requires understanding who (in terms of roles) the primary users of the tools will be, how they plan to use the tools and with whom they need to collaborate. We will first examine the issue of the possible roles and scope of collaboration, then look at the three areas of focus for the two markets.

1.0 Collaborative Roles With BPA

Gartner defines enterprise BPA tools market as the business-modeling space in which business professionals (business users, business architects and business process analysts) and IT analysts collaborate on enterprise business architecture aimed at transforming and improving business performance, including process analysis and design in support of BPI initiatives. Obviously, organizations may not have individuals filling all these roles, especially as they begin their business process management (BPM) initiatives, and they may have a limited scope of BPI in mind. However, understanding these roles can be helpful in deciding the proper focus of tool selection. For example, organizations needing to support all these roles would be most likely to choose a tool from the enterprise BPA tool market, whereas those focused on process understanding may choose a less expensive and less complex BPA technology.

Figure 1 represents a robust set of roles needed to support enterprise architecture and its integration with all aspects of solution architecture, including the business architecture roles needed to support enterprise-class BPI. Business process architects and analysts focused on BPI using business architecture technologies such as BPA tools need to work collaboratively with enterprise, technical, application and information architects. In support of moving the organization's current solution architecture forward, toward the vision of the future solution architecture, there needs to be collaborative efforts across architectures to ensure that the operational portions (at a minimum) of business processes conform to the requirements, principles and models that support the enterprise's change agenda, as captured in the gap plan and the transition road map.

Figure 1. Business Architecture and Analysis Collaboration


Enterprise Architecture
Chief Enterprise Architect
Enterprise Technology Architect
Enterprise Solution Architect
Enterprise Information Architect
Enterprise Solution Architect
Technology Architecture Team Member
Business Architecture Team Member
Data Architecture Team Member
Solution Architecture Team Member
Business Management, Support Staff and Users
IT Management and Support Staff
Project/Solution Architecture
Project Architect
Technology Architect
Application Architect
Data Architect
Business Architect
Infrastructure Planner
Application Analyst
Data Analyst
Business Analyst
Build, Buy, Assemble, Test, Deploy
Legend
Staff Transfers
Architect Position
Nonarchitect Position

Source: Gartner (September 2009)

One aspect of BPA tooling needs to be able to support this broad, architecture-driven need for collaborative modeling. The enterprise BPA tools market focuses on this need. However, many organizations may only be interested in understanding their current processes, in which case the fully functional enterprise BPA tool leaders are overkill. What is needed is a niche enterprise BPA tool that is low-cost, easy to use, and has "good enough" functionality for documenting and understanding processes. Although there may be a desire to focus on refining specific processes and automating them using the BPA capabilities of a BPMS, the BPA component may be good enough for the purposes of process documentation and understanding (although some BPMS vendors offer a solution with competitive enterprise BPA functionality).

1.1 A Closer Look at BPA Tools

Enterprise BPA tools focus on business models that define and combine value assets, stakeholders, results, customer segments, distribution channels, high-level business processes, inputs to these high-level processes, and the risks, measurements and scorecards for each of these. Enterprise business architects and business process architects use business architecture reference models that provide the context for business process models (for example, where to look for value and how to do prioritization) and the value assets for not only financial results, but also for risk avoidance, compliance, or energy consumption or exhaustion.

BPA tools are also used by business process analysts and designers to discover, document and analyze the details of the business processes as currently performed. They use models of this information in BPA tools as input into a potential new design that better reflects the business requirements' assessment for new developments or enhancements. These tools are also used to capture as-is business processes as input into to-be gap analysis for packaged implementations, and to do organizational improvement projects using approaches such as Six Sigma and Lean.

1.2 How the Roles Use BPA Tools

BPA can serve as a bridge to improve the alignment of IT efforts with business initiatives. In other words, BPA tools can be used in two contexts: by enterprise, business and IT architects to work at the enterprise and solution-architecture level to uncover and select opportunities for business improvement projects, and by IT and business process analysts and designers to gain agreement across stakeholders on a business process design that is largely executable in software. Enterprise BPA tools support the former and — generally through bridges to other tools, including BPMSs — the latter. Those focused primarily on the latter will want to consider using the BPA component of a leading BPMS. However, the BPA component of most BPMSs does not fully support the former architectural and collaboration needs of business and IT technologies.

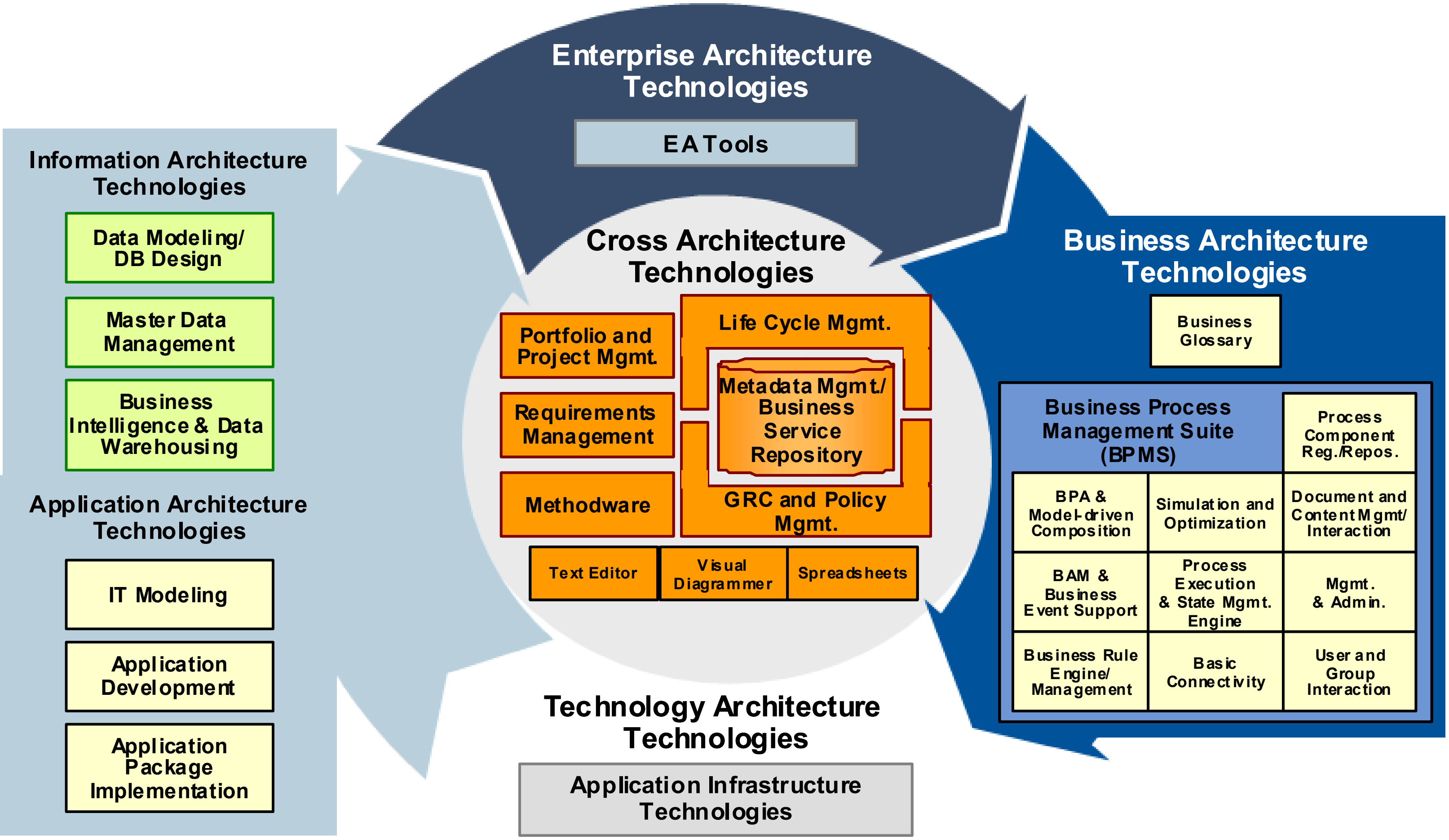
Some BPMSs do not really have a BPA component. They focus their process modeling on integrating process design and execution models in support of the other components of the BPMS (see "Selection Criteria Details for Business Process Management Suites, 2009").

For more information on the roles as they relate to the enterprise and solution architectures, see "Building the Enterprise Architecture Team." See "Q&A: Business Analyst and Business Architect Roles Are Different" for more details on the differences between these two roles.

1.3 Reference Architecture for Collaborative BPI

In "A Reference Architecture for Collaborative Enterprise Business Process Improvement Technologies," and as depicted in Figure 2, we identified six architectural categories of collaborative technologies needed to support a breadth of BPI types of initiatives. To ensure the consistency of, and compliancy with, the rules of the business process models in other technologies (and to leverage, reuse and automate tasks based on the work of the BPA modelers), the technologies need to be federated or integrated with collaborative processes to keep things in sync. This essentially involves the sharing of metadata, which is a nontrivial management issue (see "Tutorial:Gartner Clarifies the Definition of Metadata," "Metadata Business Threats and Opportunities" and "Metadata Management Technology Integration Cautions and Considerations" for more details).

Figure 2. Reference Architecture for Collaborative Enterprise BPI


Enterprise Architecture Technologies
EA Tools
Information Architecture Technologies
Data Modeling/ DB Design
Master Data Management
Business Intelligence & Data Warehousing
Application Architecture Technologies
IT Modeling
Application Development
Application Package Implementation
Cross Architecture Technologies
Portfolio and Project Mgmt.
Requirements Management
Methodware
Life Cycle Mgmt.
Metadata Mgmt./ Business Service Repository
GRC and Policy Mgmt.
Text Editor
Visual Diagrammer
Spreadsheets
Business Architecture Technologies
Business Glossary
Business Process Management Suite (BPMS)
Process Component Reg./Repos.
BPA & Model-driven Composition
Simulation and Optimization
Document and Content Mgmt/ Interaction
BAM & Business Event Support
Process Execution & State Mgmt. Engine
Mgmt. & Admin.
Business Rule Engine/ Management
Basic Connectivity
User and Group Interaction
Technology Architecture Technologies
Application Infrastructure Technologies

Acronym Key: BAM — business activity monitoring; DB — database

Source: Gartner (September 2009)

Individual organizations may not need all the components depicted in this reference architecture diagram. For example, one type of BPI initiative might focus on the assembly of IT software and data assets by a business process analyst using a workflow and orchestration tool to implement a BPI process using a "design, assemble and deploy" approach with a BPMS, without having to worry about other aspects of collaboration. In this case, the initial use of the BPMS can later be extended to support other types of solutions based on more-robust analytical approaches, including model-driven composition in collaboration with enterprise architects and IT analysts (assuming the BPA component of the BPMS meets your needs, or a best-of-breed enterprise BPA tool is purchased to augment the BPMS and is bridged into it).

Some of the technologies depicted in Figure 2 may not be used by business process architects and analysts, but are needed for a given BPI initiative to be successful. For example, the "cross architecture technologies" include coordination with portfolio management personnel (i.e., to get funding and resources for the project) and to be able to work with those responsible for governance, risk and compliancy (GRC), as related to solutions being implemented by the project team. Also, there may be a need to coordinate efforts with those using data modeling/database design tools and object-oriented analysis and design tools, such as IT data analysts and developers responsible for the data and application architectures in delivering application solutions in support of BPI.

2.0 Buyer Focus Areas

The four buyer focus areas for BPA tools are:

- Enterprise BPA tools
- BPA as part of a BPMS
- Low-cost, easy-to-use BPA components of BPMSs
- Low-cost, easy-to-use niche enterprise BPA tools

2.1 Overview: Enterprise BPA Tools

The first market — which we call the enterprise BPA tools market — supports the enterprise business architect, business process architects and process analyst roles in modeling efforts to address enterprise business architecture and BPI efforts in collaboration with other parts of the solution architectures.

2.2 Overview: BPA as Part of a BPMS

The second market — the BPMS tools market — supports business process analysts and all other process stakeholders, including IT through the use of a core BPA component in the BPMS. Use of a BPMS is most appropriate for BPI efforts in which business users are empowered to make process changes and where processes change continuously or frequently (see "Using the BPM Four Corners Framework to Evaluate a Vendor's BPMS Strategy").

The BPA capabilities in most BPMSs generally lack the focus and functionality to handle the broader enterprise business architecture and BPI needs (although some vendors play in both markets with their BPA tools). BPMSs whose BPA component has enterprise-class BPA capabilities are recognized when rating that component as part of the overall BPMS tools market product evaluation, but the BPA component is not treated as a part of a larger BPA tool submarket.

2.3 Overview: Low-Cost, Easy-to-Use BPA Components of BPMSs

Increasingly, BPMS tool vendors are offering their BPA component as a stand-alone, free or low-cost, easy-to-use, good-enough alternative to enterprise BPA tools. Many of these tools do not lock you into having to use the vendor's BPMS, but the vendor is using the BPA tool as a "stalking horse" to get customers to start BPI projects, which later will need a BPMS, and the logical choice would be to stay with that same vendor (especially if there is some special added value in the integration of the BPA tool with other components in the BPMS). Therefore, the use of the BPA component of a vendor's BPMS initially (or added on later on in the implementation of a BPMS) can provide value to prospects of low-cost, easy-to-use BPA tools.

2.4 Overview: Low-Cost, Easy-to-Use Niche Enterprise BPA Tools

There is also a second class of these low-cost, easy-to-use BPA tools that is more focused on providing good enough modeling capabilities as niche players in the enterprise BPA tools market — especially for use by less-sophisticated process modelers and business users. These tend to be independent of any BPMS, and most are also independent of the BPI approach for implementation (i.e., BPMS versus application package purchase or development). Moreover, these tools can be used as a complement to leading enterprise BPA tools as part of a "BPA toolkit," which can also include the use of the BPA component of the BPMSs as a third alternative.

As we will discuss, the selection of these low-cost, easy-to-use tools are a natural "next-step" from doing BPI documentation and understanding other business analyst and user tools.

3.0 BPA With Other Important, Complementary Business Analyst and User Tools

3.1 Microsoft Office and Visio

Key parts of the business architecture technologies portion of the reference architecture for enterprise BPI are the tools used by business users to document their processes, organization structures, business rules, text processors, visual diagrammers and spreadsheets, such as Microsoft Word, PowerPoint and Excel. These, in turn, are integrated with Microsoft's low-cost, easy-to-use modeling tool, Visio, which can be used for BPA purposes — as well as for enterprise architecture (EA) documentation and modeling and other purposes.

Many organizations do not attempt to share Visio process models with other technologies; instead, they pass requirements to other roles and tools in Word. Therefore, although Visio does not support the "footprint" of an enterprise BPA tool, it is widely used by those doing BPI, with approximately 34% of BPA market share in the last BPA Magic Quadrant (see "Magic Quadrant For Business Process Analysis Tools" and "Understanding Vendor Placement in the BPA Tools Magic Quadrant").

Part of that percentage is the use of Visio *with* other BPA tools. Virtually every leading enterprise BPA tool has a bridge from Visio into it, to allow models created by business users and less-sophisticated modelers with those architects and analysts who are able to use the more complex and expensive enterprise BPA tools to clean up the Visio models and manage them with others in the more-strategic product.

Thus, tools such as Visio can be considered as contributing to the enterprise BPA tool market, especially when the models are to be used just for documentation and understanding purposes, or for projects that do not use a BPMS. However, some portion of the models will contribute to

BPMS implementations, and a subset of Visio revenue needs to be counted toward that market in that case.

3.2 Other Low-Cost, Easy-to-Use BPA Tools

Other tools are being used in a similar manner. Lombardi's Blueprint is an example of a popular, low-cost, easy-to-use BPA tool for documenting and understanding BPA models. We expect to see more open-source BPA tools offered in competition against these low-cost tools. Also, some of the BPMS vendors are offering their integrated process modeling tools in a stand-alone manner and at a low cost, targeting the same type of user as Lombardi. In addition, there are vendors of other types of modeling tools that have extended those tools to include a BPA component at a low cost (for example, Spar Systems with its IT modeling tool, Enterprise Architect, and Embarcadero Technologies with EA/Studio as a low-cost complement to its leading data modeling tool, ER/Studio).

4.0 Matching BPA Tools to Roles and Needs

Low-cost, easy-to-use BPA tools are a good way to get started with BPI when you are trying to understand the current architecture and processes and do not need to worry about the type of implementation that will follow (i.e., via a BPMS, development or package purchase). Due to the simplicity and accessibility of these tools, they are also a good way to build up a common to-be process view among business stakeholders. It may also be the only alternative you have due to cost restrictions. Long term, these types of tools may be applicable for some modelers (due to cost or complexity issues) as a complement to other modelers using enterprise BPA tools, BPMSs or both.

However, most business architects and more-sophisticated process analysts will find these tools insufficient. Some lack the ability to share or version models across teams. Most lack leading functionalities like activity-based costing and simulations of processes to identify time and cost improvements (see "Enterprise Business Process Analysis Tool Selection Criteria" for more information on BPA functions and features).

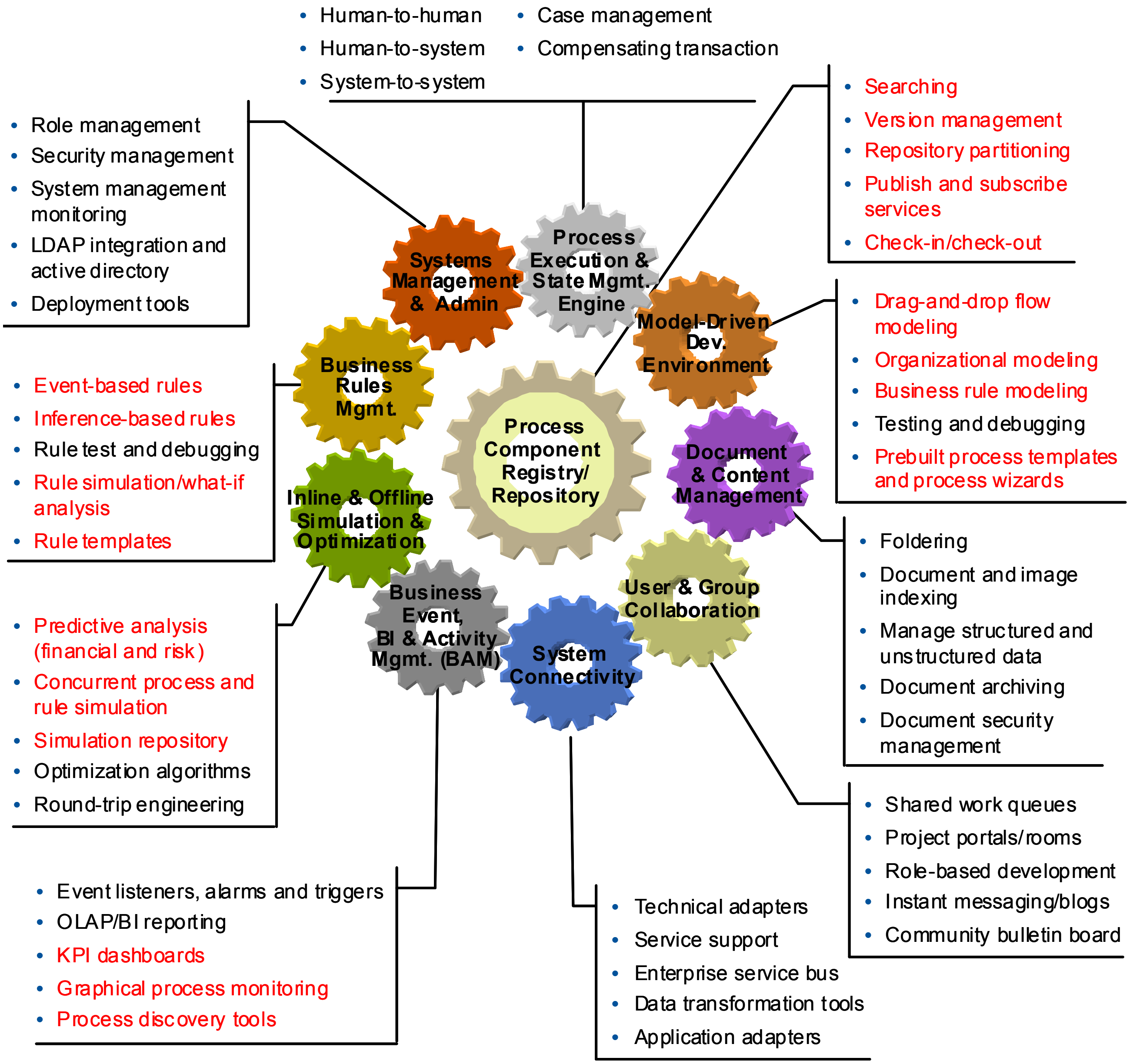
If you know, based on your future solution architecture, that you will need the capabilities of an enterprise BPA tool to integrate with IT to facilitate application development, or that you plan to mostly do BPI using a specific BPMS, then you might be better off making your BPA tool selections based on their ability to enable integration with other technologies sooner, rather than later.

5.0 Two BPA Tool Markets

5.1 Market 1: BPA as Part of a BPMS

The first market in which we track BPA tools is as a component of a BPMS (see Figure 3). We have highlighted in red the BPA/modeling tool capabilities in the BPMS.

Figure 3. Sample Best-of-Breed BPA Capabilities in a BPMS


• Human-to-human
• Human-to-system
• System-to-system
• Case management
• Compensating transaction
• Searching
• Version management
• Repository partitioning
• Publish and subscribe services
• Check-in/check-out
• Role management
• Security management
• System management monitoring
• LDAP integration and active directory
• Deployment tools
Systems Management & Admin
Process Execution & State Mgmt. Engine
Model-Driven Dev. Environment
• Drag-and-drop flow modeling
• Organizational modeling
• Business rule modeling
• Testing and debugging
• Prebuilt process templates and process wizards
Business Rules Mgmt.
Process Component Registry/ Repository
Document & Content Management
• Event-based rules
• Inference-based rules
• Rule test and debugging
• Rule simulation/what-if analysis
• Rule templates
Inline & Offline Simulation & Optimization
• Foldering
• Document and image indexing
• Manage structured and unstructured data
• Document archiving
• Document security management
User & Group Collaboration
Business Event, BI & Activity Mgmt. (BAM)
System Connectivity
• Predictive analysis (financial and risk)
• Concurrent process and rule simulation
• Simulation repository
• Optimization algorithms
• Round-trip engineering
• Shared work queues
• Project portals/rooms
• Role-based development
• Instant messaging/blogs
• Community bulletin board
• Event listeners, alarms and triggers
• OLAP/BI reporting
• KPI dashboards
• Graphical process monitoring
• Process discovery tools
• Technical adapters
• Service support
• Enterprise service bus
• Data transformation tools
• Application adapters

Source: Gartner (September 2009)

We see vendors and organizations implementing BPA in a BPMS in one of three ways:

- Most BPMSs provide "process modeling capabilities" at the physical process flow and orchestration level of detail. We sometimes refer to these as BPM process models. Most of these BPM tools can also be used to produce process models at more-abstracted levels of detail — for example, for analysis and logical design levels of abstraction.

- Some integrated BPMSs from a single vendor have a separate (complementary to BPM) BPA tool in the suite.

- Virtually all BPMSs support having a third-party BPA tool which bridges into the BPMS. These may be free, low-cost or easy to use BPA products from a third party. More commonly, these are robust, collaborative and generally more-expensive third-party enterprise BPA tools that address the broader scope of the reference architecture for enterprise BPI.

For more information on BPMSs, see "Magic Quadrant for Business Process Management Suites."

5.2 Market 2: Enterprise BPA

BPI using a BPMS can provide substantial improvements to process efficiencies. However, there are other types of improvements involving people, financials and organizations, at multiple levels of detail, including business functions, subfunctions and processes, that may never be implemented using a BPMS. For example, a BPI change may require altering an IT application, or implementing a purchased package that must be integrated into the existing application portfolio. Moreover, implementing these business efficiencies may require a more-formal, robust set of methods and tools — and collaboration with other types of IT architects and analysts.

In this latter case, business analysts may be using BPM methodologies and modeling techniques that are depicted using the business process modeling notation (BPMN) standard, while IT modelers may be using completely different, object-oriented analysis and design methodologies and tools which adhere to the Unified Modeling Language (UML) standard. Best-of-breed enterprise BPA tools are able to bridge in a bidirectional manner with the IT modeling tools.

Therefore, it should come as no surprise that the key technology in the reference architecture for collaborative enterprise BPI is the enterprise BPA tool. In many cases, this will also be the business modeling component of an EA tool suite to document the enterprise business architecture (EBA) that supports the enterprise business architect (see "Magic Quadrant for Enterprise Architecture Tools"). This component can also be used by business process architects and analysts to reuse the work of the enterprise architects, or if there is no EA tool suite, the business modeling component of the EA suite can be purchased separately as a best-in-breed enterprise BPA tool.

Because some of the business modeling components in the EA tool suite are expensive, complex and not offered in a business analyst role-based manner, business process architects and analysts may want to consider tools from vendors that specialize in the "enterprise BPA tool" market, rather than the EA tools market.

Generally speaking, the BPA capabilities within the BPMS are not able to satisfy the level of robustness and "footprint" (in terms of collaborative bridges) that the enterprise-BPA tools have. When they do, they should be considered as competing in both the "enterprise BPA tool" and BPMS markets.

5.3 Matching the Two BPA Markets to the Roles and Needs

The use of BPMSs and enterprise BPA tools is on the rise. However, especially in times of cost containment, low-cost, easy-to-use BPA tools like Visio integrated with Word, PowerPoint and Excel remain the most common way of documenting and understanding the business for BPI initiatives. At some point, most organizations identify the need for more. It could be that they have decided to implement a BPMS or they require the more-robust capabilities of an enterprise BPA tool — or both. Most organizations that implement a BPMS will find that its BPA capabilities are good enough to do BPI redesigns using the models, and can live without some of the more-robust capabilities of the enterprise tools. However, organizations looking to achieve best-in-class collaboration across the reference architecture for enterprise BPI will want to consider tools from the enterprise BPA tool market with bridges (or tighter integration, if available) with the BPMSs.

To be more explicit, for those organizations focused on the BPMS tools market, the BPA capability and tight integration of BPMS support for the business process life cycle is crucial for continuous process improvement and business transformation usage scenarios. Round-tripping is critical in the first usage scenario, and the ability to communicate with a wide variety of business stakeholders and rapid prototyping are key to success in the second usage scenario, as described in "Using the Top Four BPMS Usage Scenarios to Evaluate a Vendor's BPMS Strategy." Nevertheless, the BPA capabilities of a BPMS may need to be complemented by an enterprise BPA tool to meet the needs of business process architects, or when formal and robust methods are used for solution development.

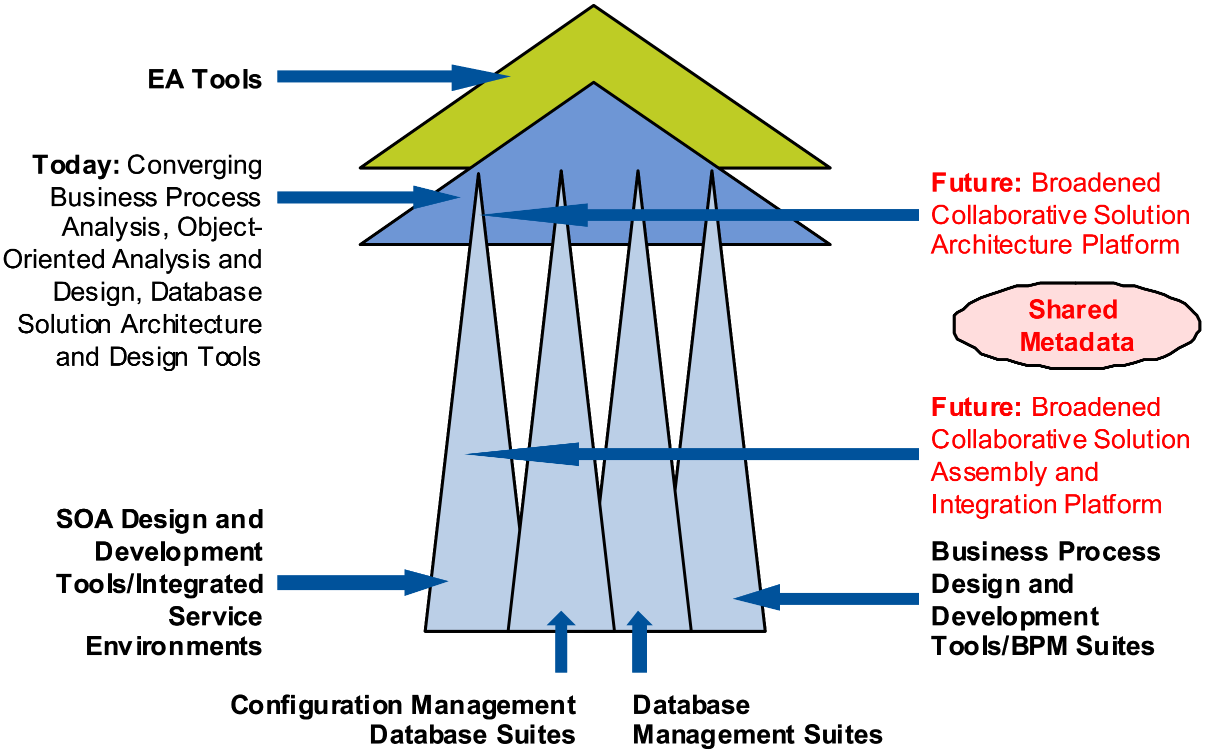
6.0 The Future of the Enterprise BPA Tools Market

The roles depicted in Figure 2, including those of the enterprise business architects, business architects and analysts in support of BPI initiatives, should exist for many years to come. However, the collaborative processes and technologies will continue to evolve. Therefore, when making a BPA tool choice, if you want that decision to be consistent with your strategic technology directions, then you may want to factor in what is happening in the areas of collaborative platforms. This is being fueled for a number of directions. For example, those responsible for GRC are pressuring architects, analysts, designers and developers to be able to track policies and rules across multiple environments, roles and levels of detail. The desire for consistency and reuse is causing vendors to look at ways to federate and integrate metadata about the shared models, policies and rules across technologies — and, in some cases, to consolidate technologies to overcome metadata management issues.

Modeling standards are converging in ways that enable different types of architects and analysts to reuse the same modeling artifacts. For example, at Object Management Group (OMG), there is work being done across the IT modeling standard, the UML and the BPMN standard to improve sharing and collaboration. As more organizations look to leverage the efforts of architects and analysts in a more collaborative way, we see increased need and desire to integrate more tightly shared models across roles as part of a more integrated, collaborative modeling platform.

Therefore, as depicted in Figure 4, we expect to see increased convergence of tooling focused at the level of a "solution architecture tool suite/platform," which provides this level of collaboration for architects and analysts. And, in turn, we expect to see this platform integrated with others like BPMSs, integrated service environments, configuration database management suites and data management suites for those working in roles at the more-detailed analysis, design, delivery and operations level. In this new world, automation and integration will have more to do with the sharing of metadata (some of which comes from the BPA models) than historically. For more details, see "Trends in Collaborative Modeling."

Figure 4. Trends In Collaborative Modeling and Tooling


EA Tools
Today: Converging Business Process Analysis, Object-Oriented Analysis and Design, Database Solution Architecture and Design Tools
Future: Broadened Collaborative Solution Architecture Platform
Shared Metadata
Future: Broadened Collaborative Solution Assembly and Integration Platform
SOA Design and Development Tools/Integrated Service Environments
Business Process Design and Development Tools/BPM Suites
Configuration Management Database Suites
Database Management Suites

Source: Gartner (September 2009)

Clearly, if you have a strategic alliance with, or investment in, a specific vendors' products, then you may want to give more weight to their BPA tools — and those of their strategic partners — as part of an "integrated solution stack." This might include a commitment to "super vendors" like IBM, Microsoft, Oracle or SAP concerning their integrated technology stacks (including BPA) of architecture, design and development tools, application packages, and runtime platforms. Other organizations with more-heterogeneous package and runtime environments might still want to standardize on a single-vendor or best-of-breed integrated solution architecture platform for collaboration of architects and analysts.

As with all markets — we expect to see continued consolidation in the enterprise BPA tools market, especially as it evolves to become part of a solution architecture tool suite market. In the three- to five-year range, we expect to see a handful of leaders survive, with all the other vendors looking to establish long-term niche role specialties, being acquired by a BPMS vendor looking to improve its BPA capabilities and extend its reach to architects, or ceasing to exist. Beyond five years, we expect to see enterprise BPA tools ceasing to exist as a market, and being subsumed into a solution architecture tool suite market. BPA tools will continue to exist, but will be a component of the broader solution architecture suite, where architects and analysts share the models and metadata. It is difficult to say, at this point, whether this suite will also become an extension of the EA tools market, but in all likelihood, the EA tool vendors will be the ones creating the solution architecture tool suites, and, therefore, the EA tools will minimally be integrated into them.

At the same time, BPMSs will need to deal with these issues of collaboration. We expect there to be good integration between the emerging solution architecture suites and the BPMSs. However, we also expect the BPA component of the BPMSs to be more tightly integrated with other design-level technologies than in the past (see "Signs That a BPMS Vendor Is Following One or More Technology Evolutionary Paths").

Finally, we expect there to be more alternatives available over time, in terms of open-source BPA, BPMS and solution architecture options, as well as more hosted alternatives for these technologies via Web services "in the cloud."

Organizations looking to make strategic choices on BPA tools will want to factor in these "collaborative modeling futures" into their decisions, with the understanding that there are tactical needs and opportunities that certain BPA tools can best meet, and the future has yet to arrive.

RECOMMENDED READING

"A Reference Architecture for Collaborative Enterprise Business Process Improvement Technologies"

"Enterprise Business Process Analysis Tool Selection Criteria"

"Magic Quadrant For Business Process Analysis Tools"

"Understanding Vendor Placement in the BPA Tools Magic Quadrant"

"Magic Quadrant for Enterprise Architecture Tools"

"Building the Enterprise Architecture Team"

"Q&A: Business Analyst and Business Architect Roles Are Different"

"Magic Quadrant for Business Process Management Suites"

"Selection Criteria Details for Business Process Management Suites, 2009"

"Using the BPM Four Corners Framework to Evaluate a Vendor's BPMS Strategy"

"Using the Top Four BPMS Usage Scenarios to Evaluate a Vendor's BPMS Strategy"

"Signs That a BPMS Vendor Is Following One or More Technology Evolutionary Paths"

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